

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 18th, 2020
6:30 p.m.**

On Tuesday, February 18th, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., at Town Hall the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met.

Officials and staff present: Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Bruce Cheeseman, Stan Dukas, Jessica Frost, Al Voegele, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, and Recording Secretary Jenn Gray.

Public: St. Albans Messenger Reporter Michael Frett, Paula Johnson, John Johnson, Jonathan Giroux, and Erin Creley.

Chair B. Deso called the Selectboard meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Payroll

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated February 7th, 2020 in the amount of \$19,601.83 and February 14th, 2020 in the amount of \$19,898.35. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

General Warrant

MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the general warrant dated February 18th, 2020 in the amount of \$58,692.20. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Infrastructure Development Fund Warrant

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development Fund warrant in the amount of \$100. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Industrial Park Warrant

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Industrial Park warrant in the amount of \$805.82. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Department of Public Works Reserve

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Department of Public Works Reserve account warrant in the amount of \$690.00. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes for Monday, February 3rd, as written. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Public Comment

A. Voegele stated that some of the roads in Town are in the worst shape he's seen in 40 years. B. Deso stated that maybe we should spend some of our LOT (Local Option Tax) on improvements to French Hill Road. He suggested we look to do something in fiscal year 2021.

J. Frost explained that Rise VT had hired consultants to complete a study on trail counts for the Bay Park and Town Forest. The full report explains the economic benefits to having trails and how that translates into jobs and revenue for the community. J. Frost will forward the report and explain it at a future meeting to the Board.

S. Dukas explained that we have 28 places in the Town that we use when turning around during the plow season. He went on to explain that this appears to be dangerous. C. Johnson agreed and that we can take a look at that and make it a priority this coming year.

Rules of Procedure & Communication with the Press Policy

B. Deso explained that we need to come up with something more concrete in the Selectboard Rules of Procedure. It is not appropriate to use titles when talking about Town oriented business or politics. He recommended referencing the Communication with the

Press Policy within the Rules of Procedure. The Board will be provided a draft for the organizational meeting in March, after Town Meeting Day.

S. Dukas explained that items that are not warned on a Selectboard agenda may be added to the agenda, but no motions would be made until the item is properly warned on a future agenda.

Getting back to the Rules of Procedure, B. Deso suggested adding a new section #14 that references the Communication with the Press Policy in the Rules of Procedures.

Liquor Control Board

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to recess the Selectboard meeting and convene as the Liquor Control Board. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Liquor License Renewals

Ste. Marie Enterprises (Bay Store), Pizza Hut, and Kinney Drugs submitted applications for renewals.

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve all Liquor License renewal applications as presented. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to adjourn the Liquor Control Board and reconvene the Selectboard meeting. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Town Manager's Report

Northern State Correctional Facility – Superintendent Greg Hale

Mr. Hale contacted C. Johnson late this afternoon to say he was unable to attend tonight's meeting due to illness. If the Board has any questions or concerns, they were asked to provide them to C. Johnson.

Plaque Dedication Request at Bay Park – Manford Jarvis Farm Granite

C. Johnson explained that Paula Johnson approached the Town to see if they would consider putting a plaque up at the stone house at the Bay park. Ms. Johnson came before the Board to explain her request. Her great-grandfather, Manford Jarvis gifted to the Bay Park all the red stone for the Bay Park and helped to build the tollhouse and the bathhouse. Ms. P. Johnson went on to explain that she attended an event this past summer in the Bay Park and noticed there wasn't any type of recognition for this donation. Her family would pay for a plaque and there would be no expense to the Town to make this recognition. She was seeking guidance and permission to put up a memorial plaque.

A. Voegele suggested recognizing all the contributions with a plaque that explains the red rock donation as well as the work the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) did in building the bathhouse. B. Deso suggested if we go that route, it should be at the Town's expense. A. Voegele agreed.

J. Frost suggested a historical marker. A. Voegele stated that we may have to work with the State on a historical marker.

Ms. P. Johnson asked to be included in the wording on the plaque. The Board agreed and along with A. Mashtare, will work directly with Ms. P. Johnson. Ms. P. Johnson also explained there will be a big family reunion in the Bay Park in 2021 and she would like to unveil the plaque then. The Board was in consensus.

Petition for a Certificate of Public Good – Green Mountain Power

No action required.

Summary of Town Meeting Day Articles

C. Johnson briefly went through the articles for the Town Meeting Day ballot.

Article 4, regarding the proposed municipal pool, C. Johnson explained she had heard concern from some community members that if we vote yes on the pool article, that somehow that precludes us from spending Local Option Tax (LOT) dollars to support a Town Hall. This is not a question of pool vs. Town Hall. We can do both projects. She went on to explain that the Town gets about \$900,000 a year from LOT revenues and asking to obligate less than \$200,000 to a community pool does not preclude us from also using those funds to

build a Town Hall. It is not accurate to say that if we build this community pool we somehow cannot afford to pay for a Town Hall. A "Yes" vote on the pool does not raise taxes.

A. Voegele did state that the fees for the pool will be the same for both Town and City residents. Planning Commissioner, Erin Creley asked if it would be possible to get an estimate on fees and expenses prior to the vote. C. Johnson explained the City is going to create that, but we are not going to be obligated to pay any of those fees, other than user fees that will be similar to the City's fees. The City is working on that, estimating what the user fees will be, however, some of that is unknown at this time. Ms. Creley confirmed with C. Johnson that the City will take on the additional expenses and the Town would not be responsible for operation and maintenance costs. C. Johnson confirmed that statement.

Article 8, regarding the purchase of a new plow truck for the Department of Public Works (DPW), B. Deso asked A. Mashtare if the plow truck that we approved last year was on the road yet? A. Mashtare stated that it is not. Custom plow equipment is scheduled to be set up the first of May. So, he probably won't see the truck until November or December of this year. B. Deso asked if we were looking at a similar timeline for this next truck (being asked for in Article 8)? A. Mashtare explained that if the voters pass the purchase of this truck, and he gets it ordered right away, he might see a truck chassis by late fall. Probably be the following winter before we can use this truck. B. Deso stated that this is due to an industry backlog. A. Mashtare explained the replacement scheduled for the trucks and stated that there are only 3 companies in the state of Vermont that builds these trucks and they are backlogged. A. Mashtare went on to explain that he's looking at other options in places such as Bangor, Maine and Long Island, New York to get this truck set up quicker so we have it on the road.

A. Voegele asked if the Planning Commission should review the Capital Plan and change the schedule for adding new trucks or replacing trucks? A. Mashtare explained that the Capital Plan does reflect his revised suggestions on replacement. It gets us more in line as we move forward. C. Johnson stated that this has been addressed. B. Deso stated that our planning documents line up with the need, it's just that we need to communicate it more and more as we continue to ask for these purchases. A. Voegele stated that to him, it sounds like there is a delay of almost two years. A. Mashtare said pretty much. He went on to explain that he brought this up to the Board previously. If we are putting money aside for 10 or 11 years to get a truck, we shouldn't have to go back to the voter again to ask to spend the money we collected 10 or 11 years ago. B. Deso suggested to structure the annual contributions to the reserve fund more like we do with the Fire Department's. C. Johnson stated that policy is less about rules and more about politics. She went on to say that she has the authority to order those trucks now, if the Board is comfortable with it and we know that the taxpayers have approved this money, we should be able to order the truck sooner rather than later. C. Johnson continued to say that if this truck (on Article 8) gets approved, we are going to order it immediately and shorten up that 2 year lag. The Board agreed that the Town Manager should have that discretion, thereby eliminating the need to request taxpayer approval a second time.

Schedule

The next Selectboard meetings are Monday, March 2nd and Monday, March 16th. The Public Informational Hearing will be held on Monday, March 2nd.

Chair's Report

B. Deso explained that at a previous Selectboard meeting, regarding the anti-Semitic flyers that were being circulated around Town, he mistakenly made a poorly received comment about Catholicism and the implication of hatred towards religions. He was heated and very emotional about it and if he offending anyone with any of his comments, he offered his cell number (393-7074) and ask for people to call him to talk about it.

B. Deso explained in the City's effort to educate people about the pool, they have an EDDM permit through the post office to send mailers around to City and Town residents. The City is paying for this service.

B. Deso asked the Messenger to design some banners; one to be located at the City school and one at the Town school to support the pool. He is paying for those himself, as a contribution.

Other Business

B. Cheeseman explained that Mitch Montagne is having an issue getting a picture of his father to be used for our Honor Wall. Mr. Montagne had asked B. Cheeseman if he could

use a photo that is of both his father and mother. B. Cheeseman asked the Board if they had a problem with that. A. Voegele stated he would prefer the Honor wall nominee only.

S. Dukas asked if John Blouin should have a picture on the Honor wall? The Board agreed to the photo of only the individual being honored and asked to add this request to the March 2nd meeting agenda. B. Deso also suggested Robert Johnson for Honor wall consideration.

Executive Session – Jackie Brown

B. Deso asked the Board if they wanted to go into an executive session with Jackie Brown. C. Johnson stated that she wasn't planning on it because the information was only received this afternoon, that is why it wasn't on the agenda and it wasn't warned.

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to go into executive session at 7:34 p.m. to discuss legal, contractual or personnel issues where premature general public knowledge of the subject matter would place the Town (or person involved) at a substantial disadvantage. It was further moved to enter into executive session to discuss legal, personnel and contractual issues under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and to invite in Town Manager, Carrie Johnson and Town resident Jackie Brown. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to come out of executive session at 7:50 p.m. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Adjournment

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 7:51 p.m. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary